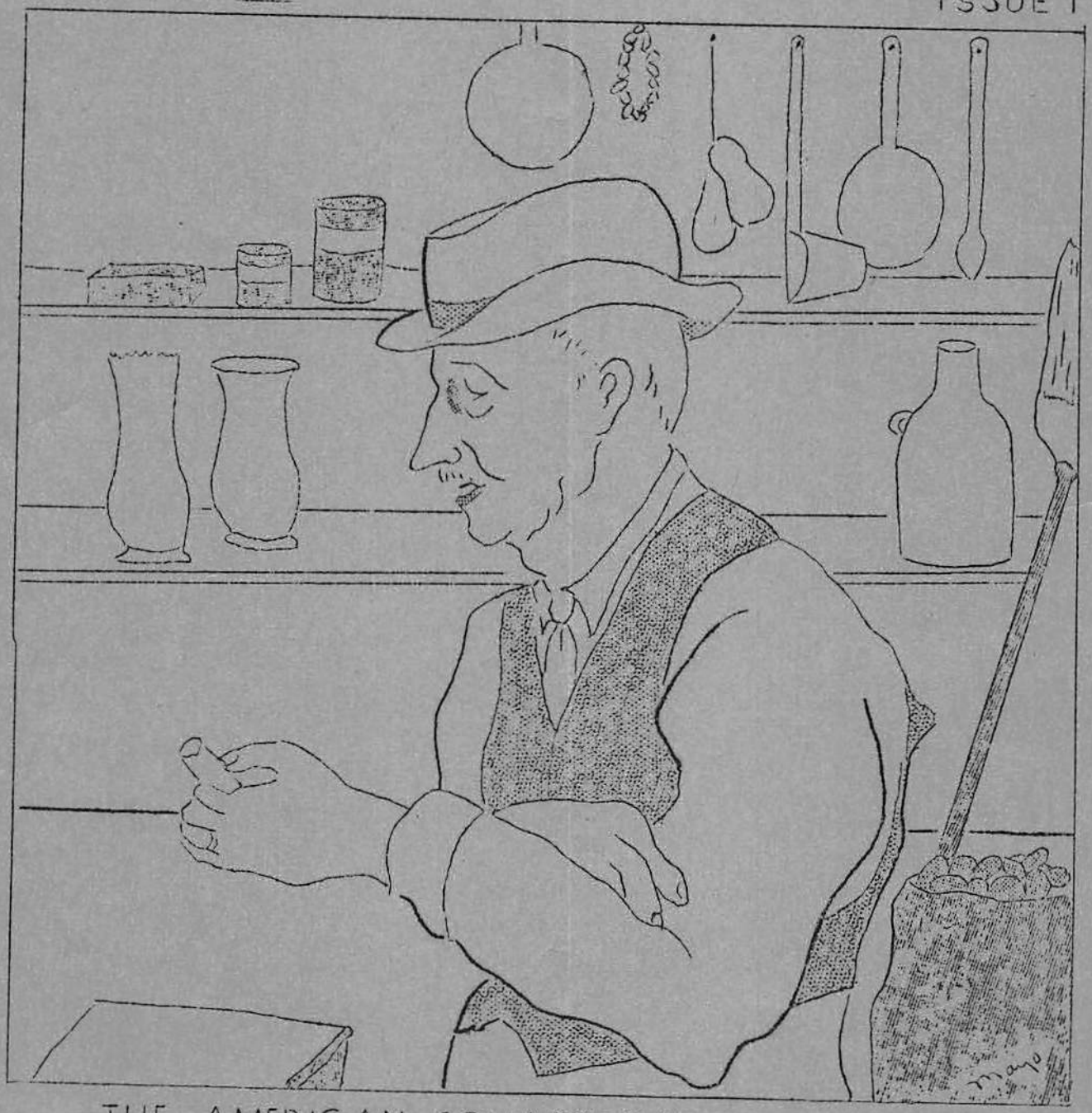
PROMENADE

A MAGAZINE OF AMERICAN FOLKLORE

VOLUME VI ISSUE I



THE AMERICAN SQUARE DANCE GROUP
MARGOT MAYO, LEADER
NEW YORK, N.Y.

"The purpose of the American Square Dance Group is to make available those rich stores of native dance, music, drama and general Americana which together comprise American folk culture; to conduct such activities without regard for race, creed, color or social position; to cooperate with those who hold similar views."

Constitution of the A. S. D. G.

PROMENADE

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The guests, hovering over the crib, were making cooing and ahing sounds, and those absurd clucking noises which are supposed to indicate joy and appreciation. They were anxious to display the gifts they had brought for the enfant.

One guest bestowed the gift of "Bringing Happiness To Others;" while another wished for "Prosperity" and a third desired "Enthusiasm and the Cooperation of All"---And so it went; the quests hovering over the crib and congratulating themselves on being so discerning.

The gathering was large and the littlest angel found himself being shoved around, his halo knocked askew, his toes trampled on. He was hungry and tired and annoyed. The chattering people formed a barricade around the crib and the littlest angel couldn't get near it. His gift, of "Smooth Sailing," became increasingly heavy and its tinsel wrappings were rumpled by the crowded guests. His feelings were hurt, for no one likes to be ignored, and he became unreasonably angry. His earlier joyous anticipation turned to extreme disgust. He walked softly to the open window and dropped the package out into the dark night.

"I do solemnly vow," quoth he, "that I shall do everything in my power to bedevil this babe through out his entire career. It's silly, of course, but if it hadn't been for this party, I'd be comfortably resting at home."

And that, gentle readers, explains why all of the stencils for the December issue of Promenade went for a ride in a stranger's car, spent two weeks traveling all over New York and Long Island, and even went on a hike in the woods of New Jersey.

We fully expected to have the issue reach our readers long before Christmas, so that our lists of suggested gifts might really be of help to you. Well, anyway, you have a good bibliography now!

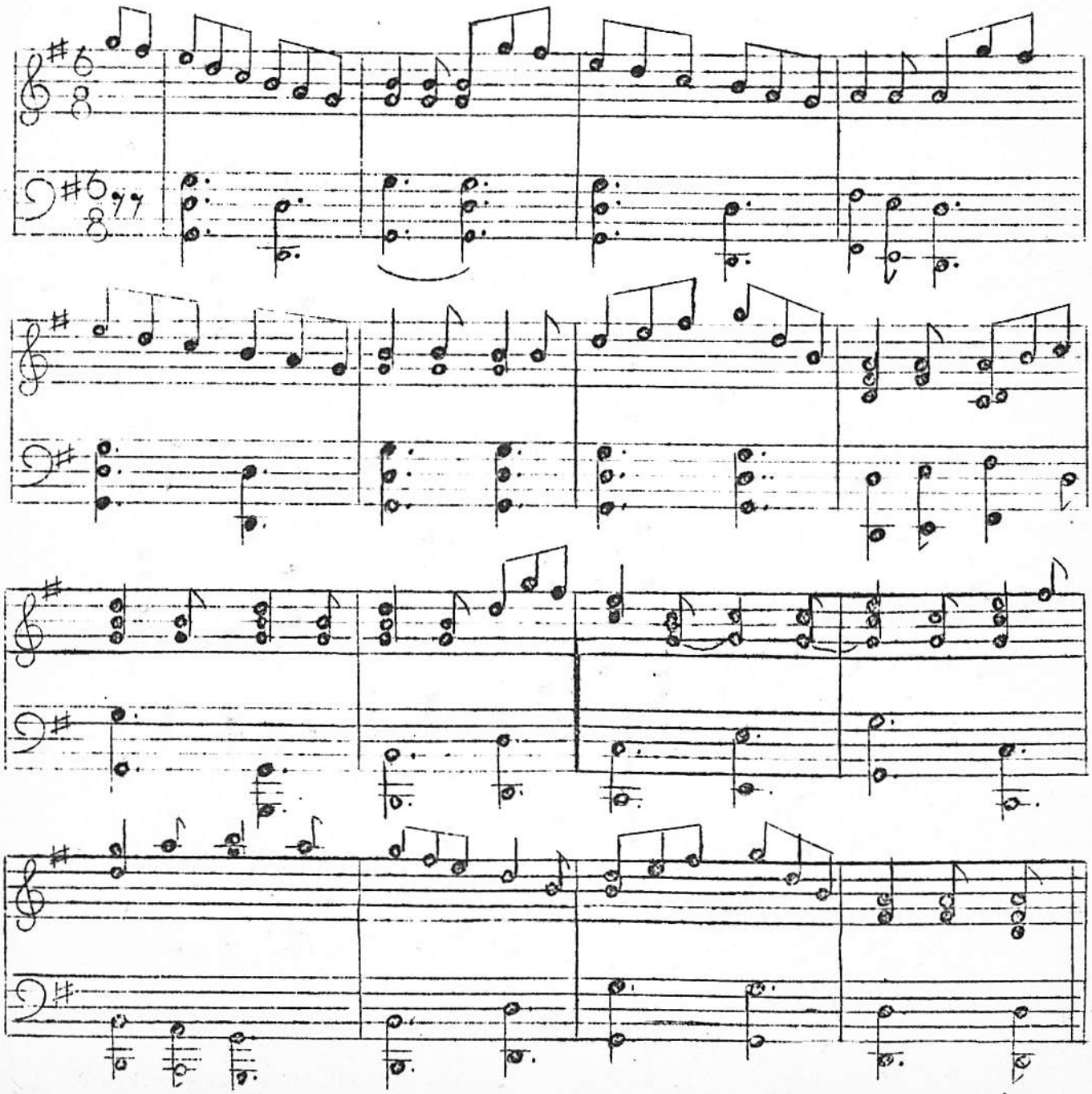
That
obnoxious
little
bad-luck
angel
of ours!!
We'll appease him yet!!

Margot

GARRY OWEN

This ancient Irish tune has played an important part in the history of our country. Garry Owen has served as a dance air, a song and a military march. As a march, Garry Owen is one of the most famous of the regimental marches and is invariably connected with the Seventh Cavalry and General Custer! It was to this tune that Custer and his men stepped out when they marched out of Fort Lincoln on their famous expedition which ended in the "Last Stand."

The name of the tune, Garryowen, means Owen's garden, and is named after a suburb of Limerick. Garryowen was one of the Irish tunes that Beethoven arranged for the collection of George Thomson. There will be more about the Beethoven arrangements in the next issue of Promenade.



THREE RUNNING SET FIGURES

John O'Leary

The running set, as you know, comes from the southern part of the United States. As many people as care to can participate at one time. In order to do the "Odds off to evens" figures there must be an even number of couples in the set. The set circles to the right, the caller selects one gent who is number one; the rest of the gents count off in order. On the call ODDS OFF TO EVENS, the odd couples go to the even couples on their right and circle four. On the change the even couples stand still and the odd couples move on to the right one couple, and wait for the next figure to be called. These three figures were collected by Margot during her trip south last summer.

OPEN AND CLOSE THE GARDEN GATE

CIRCLE FOUR, BREAK AWAY (all drop hands) OPEN AND CLOSE THE GARDEN GATE. The dancers of the even couple drop hands and each moves directly forward, while the odd couple promenades forward and back between them; even couple moves back to place. The odd couple promenades between them. Circle four and wait for the next call.

GEORGIA RANG TANG

CIRCLE FOUR, ALLEMANDE LEFT ON YOUR CORNER, GRAND RIGHT AND LEFT FOUR; DOUBLE THAT GEORGIA. Gents face your corner (lady on your left) take her left hand in your left and turn once around until you're back in place. Then take your partner's right hand in your right, pass her by (passing right shoulders) give your left hand to the opposite lady, pass her by (passing left shoulders) and meet your partner with your right hand. On the call DOUBLE THAT GEORGIA pass your partner by once more with a right hand, opposite lady with a left, meet your partner once more and swing her. Wait for the next call.

OCEAN WAVE

CIRCLE FOUR, OCEAN WAVE, (all drop hands). The odd couple faces the even couple and the two couples move toward each other, the odd couple going between the even. The odd gent turns to his left going around the even lady. The odd lady turns to her right going around the even gent, the even couple stands still. The odd couples return to their original places walking forward; while the even couple backs up to theirs. The even couple repeats the same figure, circle four and wait for the next call.

BOOK REVIEW

DEW ON JORDAN - Harold Preece and Celia Kraft (E.P. Dutton Co. - 1946).

Harold Preece, born in Texas, and his wife, Celia Kraft, who comes from Tennessee, were fascinated all their lives by the 'small sects', the little religious groups that spread the Word with amazing fervor and energy.

They met one spring day in 1941 at a tabernacle in New York's East Side, and since then have been travelling around the country observing hundreds of religious groups together. This book is a collection of their experiences in the Bible Belt, the area known as "The Country of the Word", the Southern hill country.

Many of the stories are funny, some of them are not, and many of them are presented to us as aspects of real, important problems. There is occasionally a little half-hidden sermonizing done by the authors, although they appear to be trying to present just the facts.

There is the story of Brother Dee, notorious jail-bird, and leader of various consecutive sects, each one springing up when Brother Dee himself is "sprung". According to Harold Preece Brother Dee is a powerfully religious man, but no saint.

Perhaps the most exciting part of the book deals with the famous snake-sects in the Southern hills. There are two distinct and opposite snake-cults, the Signs Followers and the Holiness Faith Healers. Mr. Preece describes in rather vivid detail his experiences at a meeting of the Signs Following sect, where he observes the well-known rites taking place.

There are stories of baptizing and feet-washing ceremonies; stories of the many false, calculating leaders who will preach any 'gospel' so long as there is a little cash in the box; and stories of bitter, violent feuds between different sects of the Baptist church.

Particular attention is paid to the Assembly Yahveh Beth Israel, an Adventist sect with a Hebrew name. This sect, commonly known as the Yahvists, is proud of its record in the field of race-relations. Their minister, Brother Squire Leroy Cessna, has this to say:

"All over the country, the disciples of Yashua are as one. We'd withdraw fellowship from any member who refused to fellowship a Negro. For the salvation of Yashua is to all men, to the Jew first, and then to the Gentile. We do not mock Him by stirring up Jew against Gentile or white against Negro. Our people were against the Black Legion here in Detroit, and they are against the Ku Klux Klan and Gerald K. Smith's movement today. We condemned the race riot, and we opened our church doors when it came, so that the Negroes, feeling from the mob, might have a safe place to stay until things got under control."

The authors also discuss the "prophets of the crooked cross", the hate-cults, who unwittingly disseminate Fascist and Nazi principles. Harold says to Celia:

"... it's hard to see people taken in by men who preach the gospel of hate. It's the bas seed sown among the people. The fruits are hate: hate of the Jew, hate of the Negro, hate of the government....hate of labor unions, hate of liberal religious agencies preaching a 'social gospel,' such as the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ, hate of the 'communist', which can mean almost anybody, hate...

"And the fields being plowed by the sowers of hate are the small sects. For here the soil has already been fertilized with resentment and frustration. The resentment of workers whose yesterday was want, and whose tomorr w is 'don't know'. The frustration of little storekeepers being shoved out of the picture by the bigger economics of a bigger world. The bitter disappointment of farmers who reap nothing but debts and mortgaged crops...

"Here, too, the soil is promising, because the people of the small sects can be worked up over small issues, such as the right way to baptize, the sinfulness of women who smoke, and the immodesty of girls who wear bobby socks."

The authors have the unusual advantage of being not only well-versed in the various technical aspects of religious cultism, but also of being personal witness to all variety of methods and ideas employed by the many sects.

Dew On Jordan is an intelligently composed book. Howard Preece and Celia Kraft know what they are about, have a lot of first-hand information, and present their story well.

Whitey.

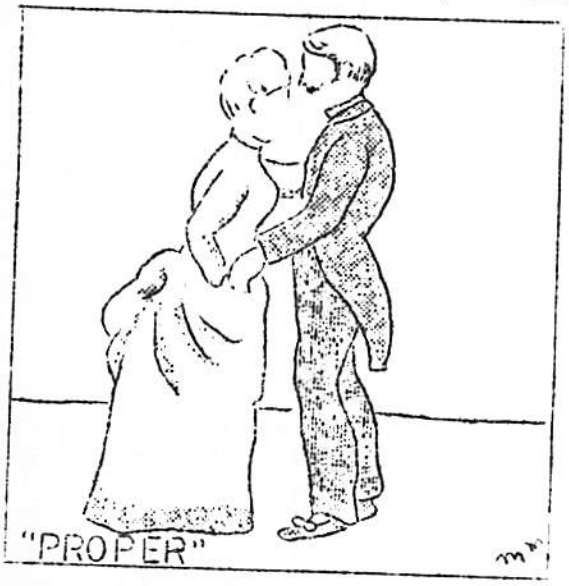
MORALITY OF MOTION

John O'Leary

The book, "Dodworth's Dancing", was written in 1885 by Allen Dodworth. It was published by Harper Brothers, and still can be bought in second hand bookstores in New York.

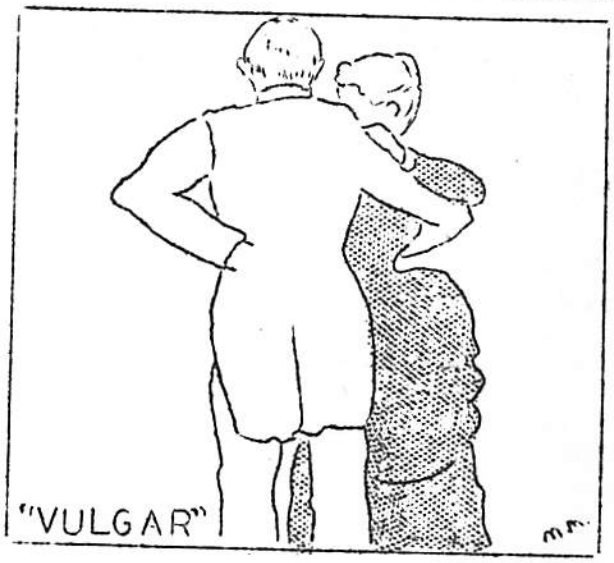
The Dodworth family was interested in dancing and music since the beginning of the 19th century. It is recorded that there was a famous dancing master by the name of Dodworth in England about 1800. It was from Sheffeld that the DOdworth family first came to America. Thomas Dodworth and his four sons arrived in New York in 1825, when Allen was eight years old. By the time he was fifteen he was an expert player of the piccolo and the trombone. At twenty-five he was in the first violin section of the Philharmonic Orchestra. He invented a new key for the cornet, his favorite instrument.

About 1830 his family organized the National Brass Band, the first of its kind in the country. Later



while Allen concentrated on other subjects, his brother Harvey managed the band, until his retirement in 1890.

Allen's major interest soon became dancing, although he never really lost interest in composing for band and symphonic orchestras. The English style of fashionable life was again becoming popular. This consisted of parties where a knowledge of court dancing, and etiquette were essential. The theater, opera and formal ball influenced high society life. There was a sudden need for instruction,



and Allen Dodworth took it upon himself to set an example in this field. He found his first academy in 1842 which subsequently was moved uptown with the extension of New York. He retired in 1887 and died in 1896. The family carried on his work until 1920 when they finally submitted to the "modern" dance craze.

DOdworth wrote his book in 1885; I wonder how many people have read or even heard of it. It should be read by everyone interested in dancing. It may at first seem outdated, because it was written for a class of people no longer in existence; but this in itself does not mean that it does not apply to the present day. You will have to remember that its language and phrasing is of the Victorian age.

A good part of each chapter is devoted to his theory that dancing will promote balance, social virtue, and above all create a basic foundation of character. He states that "motion is one of the universal sources of pleasure for all mankind, a pleasure which increases with accumulating intelligence." This is as true today in any field as it was then. A dancing master was responsible for the teaching of the rules and manners and etiquette needed in the ball-rroom;

besides the teaching of the steps of the dances that were popular at the time. (Dodworth was about the last of his kind.) These standards were applicable in everyday social life. From this stems the idea that dancing creates character.

I think that these five rules of dancing should be included here as they are applicable to all kinds of dancing. These are Dodworth's regulations and he demanded strict adherence to them.

ALERTNESS, each dancer being awake at all times to the duties required of him or her.

PROMPTNESS in taking places for the execution of a figure.

SILENCE and attention during the explanation of any figure.

OBEDIENCE At all times to the conductor during the management of the dance.

WILLINGNESS to sacrifice momentary pleasure so that others may gain.

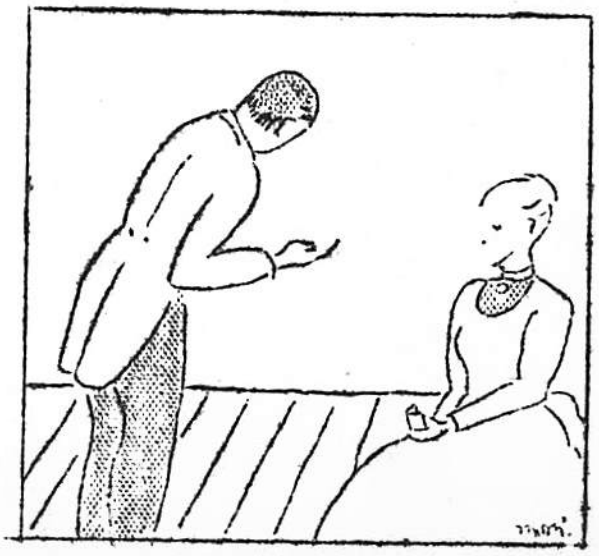
He had a problem on his hands with the introduction of the waltz galop, polka and other round dances. "A complete revolution in social dances took place. THEY were so easily learned that education in motion was deemed unnecessary." The dances were learned without the aid of a dancing master, and many mistakes were easily transmitted in this way. Simply to make the motions was all that was required; manner became secondary. Manner plays an important part in social life; it's not what you do, but how you do it. Two people may do the same thing; one conciliates while the other offends. "Good manners consists of a ready acknowledgement of the rights of others, a willingness to concede in the way of kindness, a cheerful readiness and evident pleasure in fulfilling all the duties of social life." It could all be summed up in the eleven words of the Golden RUle.

This book also gives complete directions for the dancing of the Galop, Racket, Polka, Quadrille, Waltz, Minuet, Cotillion or German and their variations. Among the Quadrilles listed are the Tuxedo, Original, Saratoga (double), and New York Lancers. There is also included The Polo, Caledonians, The Court Quadrille (Hungarian Körtanz) and the complete directions for performing the figures.

There is a chapter on Dance Music, which should be read by those interested in playing for Folk Dancing, because it also applies to the present day. "In the field of good music there are six elements; (1) speed, (2) regularity (no accelerations), (3) distinct phrasing, (4) accent exact (appropriate to each dance), (5) musical expression, (6) vim (enthusiasm, energy, excitability, something almost inexpressible in language, but vividly felt when present in a pianist)."

There were several booklets published between 1850 & 1870 for the pupils of the Dodworth Academy called "Assistants to A. Dodworth's Pupils." Therewere eight in all and they are virtually nonexistent today. There was also a revision of the book bringing it up to date in 1905. It is perhaps the most complete record of fashionable dancing in New York for the three quarters of a century beginning in 1830.

I imagine Dodworth wouldn't be very happy in the dancing world as it is today, at least as it is in the American Square Dance Group.



CHRISTMAS FOLK PARTY

On Dec. 29 the A.S.D.G. had a Christmas party at which the members' parents and folk singers alike were special guests of honor.

After a session of square sets, Margot and members of her radio choral group sang several early American Christmas hymns. Pete Seeger (president of "People's Songs") sang Black Eyed Susy and a talking blues song on atoms and protons. Adolph Bregman (an old friend of the group and co-author of "Folksongs of American Folk") sang "The Cowboy's Xmas Ball", and a beautiful version of the "Golden Vanity." Frank Warner(latest album "Hudson Valley Songs", Disc 611; using help of Pete Seeger and Tom Glazer) sang several songs and ditties he picked up in his travels, including a convincing pea - nut vendor's street calls. Tom Glazer sang songs included in his album "Olden Ballads" Keynote K-132, He sang, among many other songs, the "Sheeling Song" and the "Twelve Days of Christmas."

The party ended with a longways set and some quadrilles.

FOLK LORE CONFERENCE

On Jan. 18, the New York and New Jersey Folklore Societies met and united at a joint folk lore conference. Both societies will now share each others facilities.

There were several interesting papers presented. Henry C. Beck, Pres. of the N.J. Folklore Society spoke on the origins of the N.J. devil, and the need for a definitive work on the lore of the N.J. coast. Anne Lutz spoke on the lore of the Ramapos, and with the help of two young girls sang some traditional ballads that she had collected. Carl Withers spoke on the contribution of N.Y. children to folklore. Dr. L.D. Reddick spoke on the resources of the Schomburg collection, which is devoted to Negro lore, and is at 104 W. 36St.

The meeting was ended with a discussion of G.I. folklore by Miss Agnes Underwood of Russell Sage College. She dissertated on the origins of such G.I. characters as Clem and Smoe, and sang some songs that she picked up from her G.I. students.

SO LONG FOR A WHILE

We are sorry to report that Stewart Jamieson, our President and one of our oldest members, is leaving us to continue his studies that were interrupted by the war.

We all will miss your calling and banjo picking. We all hope that you do well, and that we get a chance to see you soon.

NOTES OF INTEREST

Lee Owens, the well known California square dance caller, and researcher, writes that he has been studying and training under many figures in the folk dance field in the United States.

He offers free to anyone interested in the folk dance copies of his newsletter on what is going on in the field of folk dancing.

Address: Lee Owens
PO Box 29
Palo Alto, Calif.

RADIO PROGRAMS

WNYC is having a folk festival February 12-22. Many famous folk singers will appear on these programs which will start at 6 PM. Our own program on Fridays will move from 6:30 to 6:00 for the length of the festival.

CONCERTS

February 25
John Jacob Niles, McMillin Theater, Columbia University.